



Date: February 14, 2003

To: Matthew Jeanneret
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From: John Zogby

RE: Results from Zogby America poll

Methodology

Zogby International conducted interviews of 1,002 likely voters chosen at random nationwide. All calls were made from Zogby International headquarters in Utica, N.Y., from Thursday, February 6 to Friday, February 7, 2003. The margin of error is +/- 3.2%. Slight weights were added to region, party, age, race, religion, and gender to more accurately reflect the voting population. Margins of error are higher in sub-groups. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest percent and might not total 100.

Commentary by John Zogby

Highways and mass transit are consistently important to Americans. In this new poll, we see that even with a dramatically higher cost of gas at the pump over last year, voters still support a two cent per gallon tax hike on gasoline.

Safety of our highways and efficiency of mass transit are a high priority. Over-crowded roads are not only a concern for commuters but also for Americans nervous about another terrorist attack.

Our polling on many issues over the years shows has revealed that voters will support a tax hike if:

- the issue is important to them
- they are convinced that the money will be spent wisely

We have seen specific instances where the public has been so severely jaded that it has opposed a tax increase for infrastructure improvements. For example, last year in Missouri, voters overwhelmingly turned down a referendum calling for a four cent per gallon increase. As we

learned in our extensive polling and focus groups on this issue, voters clearly identified the need for improvements but they did not trust their government to spend it wisely.

This is not the case with our new national polling here. American voters are saying that we need to deal with over-crowded roads and safety measures – especially the need for safety and access in a post 9/11 world.

These voters, unlike the Missourians of last year, are also saying that their trust in the current administration is high enough to trust it to spend the money wisely.

Narrative Summary

13. How important do you think the nation's highway and mass transit network is to the U.S. economy?

Extremely important	35%		
Very important	46	High importance	81%
Somewhat important	16		
Not important	1	Low importance	17
Not sure	2		

Four in five likely voters (81%) think the nation's highway and mass transit network is extremely or very important to the U.S. economy. Approximately one in six (17%) feels this network is less important, with most of these people saying it is somewhat important (16%).

Vast majorities in all sub groups say that the nation's highway and mass transit network is of *high importance* to the U.S. economy. Those giving it the highest ratings include 85%-87% of residents of large cities, 50-64 year-olds, college graduates, those living in union-member households, Jews, and people with annual household income of \$50,000-\$74,999. More than nine in ten (94%) 18-29 year-old women with children also say it is extremely or very important to our economy.

The most likely to say that the network is of *lower importance* to the economy include one-fourth or less (22%-26%) of African Americans, Hispanics, 30-49 year-old women with children, high school graduates, and people with household income less than \$15,000 and \$35,000-\$49,999.

14. How important are roads or mass transit to your every day life?

Extremely important	28%		
Very important	39	High importance	67%
Somewhat important	22		
Not important	11	Low importance	33

Two-thirds of Americans say that roads and mass transit systems are of high importance to their every day lives (67% combined extremely and very important). Half as many people say that roads and mass transit play a less important role in their daily lives (33% combined somewhat and not important).

A majority of people within each sub group rates the roads and mass transit of *high importance* to every day life. Adults age 18-64 (seven in ten) are more likely than seniors 65 and older (57%) to agree. Among the most likely to rate these systems of high importance are 72%-76% of residents of the East and large cities, those living in union-member households, college graduates, African Americans, Jews, and people with household income of \$50,000 or more. Also, more than seven in ten people whose occupation is in medical, professional, clerical, education, sales (82%), and blue-collar (80%) say these systems are of high importance to their every day lives. Most women age 18-29 with children (85%) agree.

The most likely to say that roads and mass transit are of *low importance* to their daily lives are people with household income less than \$15,000 (46%), retired folks (45%), and approximately two in five seniors 65 and older, divorced/widowed/separated adults, those with only a high school education or less, and people with household income of \$15,000-\$34,999.

15. Thinking about the road conditions in your area, would you say they are. . .

Excellent	10%		
Good	42	Positive	52%
Fair	31		
Poor	17	Negative	48

A slight majority of respondents rate the condition of roads in their areas as excellent or good (52%), although nearly as many say the road conditions in their areas are fair or poor (48%). The bulk of the positive ratings are "good," while almost two-thirds of the negative ratings are "fair."

Majorities of people living in the East, Central/Great Lakes, and West give road conditions in their areas *positive* ratings, while a majority in the South rates the condition of their roads as *negative*. Residents of large cities (49% positive, 50% negative) and small cities (48% positive, 51% negative) are among the most *closely divided*.

Those who are more likely to rate the condition of roads in their areas as *positive* include majorities of suburbanites (59%, including 58% of suburbanite women) and residents of rural areas, whites, Republicans, Independent voters, adults 50 and older, Jews (76%), born-again Christians, men, and people with household income of \$35,000-\$49,999 and \$75,000 or more (63%).

Majorities of Hispanics (75%), African Americans (61%), Democrats, 18-49 year-olds, those living in union-member households, women (including 63% of women age 30-49 with children), and people with household income less than \$35,000 rate the condition of roads in their areas as *negative*.

16. Do you agree or disagree that America is facing a transportation capacity crisis – that our roads, airports and mass transit systems are over crowded and struggling to handle a growing population and economy?

Table 1. Is There a Transportation Capacity Crisis?

	<i>Feb. '03</i>	<i>July '02</i>
Agree	67	69
Disagree	28	24
Not sure	6	7

Two-thirds of likely voters (67%) agree that America is facing a transportation capacity crisis, while just over one in four (28%) disagree. Agreement is virtually the same as it was in July of 2002, while those who disagree have slightly increased.

A majority of people in almost every sub group *agrees* that our roads, airports and mass transit systems are over crowded and struggling to handle a growing population and economy. The most likely to agree include approximately three-fourths (72%-78%) of residents of the West and small cities, adults 50 and older, Democrats, those with less than a high school education, single adults, suburban women, and people with household income less than \$15,000 and \$50,000-\$74,999. Overall, women (71%) are more likely than men (63%) to agree.

Among respondents who *disagree* are a majority of 18-29 year-old women with children (51%) and two in five 18-29 year-olds and parents of children under 17 (including 30-49 year-old women with children). Just over one-third of residents of large cities, Republicans, Hispanics, and people with household income of \$75,000 or more also disagree.

17. Most people would use the road system if they had to leave their home in the event of an emergency. Do you agree or disagree that an investment in highways, bridges, and mass transit should be considered an important element in homeland security and national defense?

**Table 2. Importance of America's Roads
To Our Security and Defense**

	<i>Feb. '03</i>	<i>July '02</i>
Agree	79	78
Disagree	17	17
Not sure	4	5

Four in five respondents (79%) agree that an investment in highways, bridges, and mass transit should be considered an important element in homeland security and national defense. Approximately one in six (17%) disagrees. No changes are seen since July of 2002.

In most sub groups, at least three-fourths of people *agree* that this is an important element in homeland security and national defense. The most likely to agree are approximately nine in ten seniors 65 and older and African Americans, as well as 83-84% of Democrats, residents of the Central/Great Lakes region and rural areas, Protestants, people with household income less than \$15,000, and women (more than men – 74%). All of the 18-29 year-old women with children (100%) agree.

Hispanics (29%) are the most likely to *disagree*, as do approximately one in five parents of children 17 and under, men, and people with household income of \$75,000 or more.

18. Recent studies show many Americans are spending more time stuck in traffic today than they were five years ago. In your own case, compared to five years ago, would you agree or disagree that traffic congestion is increasingly cutting into the time you have available with your family or for leisure activities?

Agree	56%
Disagree	40
Not sure	5

More than half of Americans (56%) agree that traffic congestion is increasingly cutting into the time they have available with their families or for leisure activities. Two in five (40%), though, disagree that traffic congestion is increasingly cutting into their personal time.

Majorities of people living in all four regions, as well as residents of large and small cities and suburbs, agree that traffic congestion is increasingly cutting into their free time. Residents of rural areas are evenly divided (48% agree, 50% disagree). More than half of adults in all age groups also agree that this is increasingly cutting into their personal time.

Those who are most likely to *agree* include 73% of Hispanics, 79% of 18-29 year-old women with children, 65% of Democrats, single adults, and suburban women, and 69% of African Americans and people with household income less than \$15,000.

The most likely to *disagree* that traffic congestion is increasingly cutting into the time they have available with their families or for leisure activities are one-half of residents of rural areas and people with household income of \$75,000 or more, and 46%-47% of Republicans, Independents, residents of the Central/Great Lakes, 30-49 year-olds, and parents of children under 17. A majority of 30-49 year-old women with children (55%) also disagree.

19. *The U.S. Department of Transportation has just released a report that says the federal government would have to invest an average of at least \$20 billion a year more in transportation programs just to ensure that highway safety, traffic congestion and the physical conditions of our roads and mass transit systems do not get worse. Some in Congress believe we should make that investment even if it means raising the federal gas tax for the first time in 10 years because highways and mass transit are so important to the U.S. economy and daily life of Americans. Do you agree or disagree with their position?*

Agree	54%
Disagree	40
Not sure	6

Just over half of respondents (54%) agree with Congress' position, while two in five (40%) disagree.

Democrats, Jews, and 18-29 year-old women with children (approximately two-thirds each) are the most likely to *agree*, as do three in five residents of the East, seniors 65 and older, those living in union-member households, and people with household income less than \$15,000.

The most likely to *disagree* are pluralities of (nearly half of) Republicans and parents of children under 17. Also disagreeing are 45%-49% of 18-49 year-olds, Hispanics, and African Americans, and more men (44%) than women (36%).

20. *Knowing what you know now, would you support or oppose an annual two cent per gallon increase in the federal gas tax if the money it generated was used exclusively to improve roads, bridges and mass transit?*

**Table 3. Support for Annual Increase
In Federal Gas Tax**

	<i>Feb. '03</i>	<i>July '02</i>
Support	64	67
Oppose	34	29
Not sure	2	4

Close to two-thirds of likely voters (64%) would support an annual two cent per gallon increase in the federal gas tax if the money it generated was used exclusively to improve roads, bridges and mass transit. One in three (34%) are opposed. Support has diminished slightly since July 2002, while opposition has increased from 29% to 34%.

A majority in almost every sub group would *support* this tax increase. This includes 79% of Jews and 71% each of Democrats, seniors 65 and older, and single adults. Women (68%) are more likely than men (59%) to show support for this tax increase.

A majority of Hispanics (54%) is *opposed* to this increase in the federal gas tax. Also opposed are approximately two in five Republicans, Independents, 30-49 year-olds, parents of children under 17, and men, and 46% of people with household income of \$25,000-\$34,999.

21. Congress soon will be deciding federal funding for transportation improvements across the country over the next 6 years. Thinking about the people elected to represent you in Congress, how important is it to you that they fight to ensure sufficient federal funding for transportation improvement projects in your local area?

Very important	45%
Somewhat important	42
Not important	11
Not sure	1

Close to nine in ten respondents (87%) feel it is very or somewhat important that Congress fights to ensure sufficient federal funding for transportation improvement projects in their local areas. Just under half (45%) says it very important. Approximately one in ten (11%) feels this is not important.

Vast majorities in all sub groups feel this is *very or somewhat important*. This includes more than 90% of Democrats, residents of the East, 50-64 year-olds, African Americans, Jews, and those who are divorced/widowed/separated. All of the women age 18-29 with children (100%) also say this is very or somewhat important.

One-third of adults with less than a high school education (33%) and 15%-18% of Independent voters, residents of the Central/Great Lakes and rural areas, 18-29 year-olds, and people with household income of \$15,000-\$35,000 are among the most likely to say this is *not important* for their local areas.